

More reasons to follow the mediterranean diet

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(HealthDay)—More and more research supports the health benefits of

the Mediterranean diet, the way of eating followed by people who live in countries around the Mediterranean Sea, such as Greece and Italy.

Various studies have indicated that it may help ward off Alzheimer's disease and other changes related to thinking and memory. It may also reduce your odds of getting type 2 diabetes. And eating this way when you're younger can increase your chances of living past 70 without a chronic illness.

While some studies have cast doubt on its seemingly infinite health benefits, more definitive evidence of its value was announced in December 2018 in a study done at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School. Researchers found that among women who most closely followed the diet, [heart disease](#) was cut by more than 25 percent.

It's also important not to lose sight of the big picture: Because it's a diet that relies on [fresh food](#) rather than packaged or processed choices, it can be a healthful way for everyone to follow general nutrition guidelines for wellness.

One aspect that people like about the Mediterranean diet is its flexibility—it's more of a style of eating than a strict regimen. That means that, within the parameters of what's acceptable, you have many choices and can build your own daily menus.

The Core of the Mediterranean Diet

- Vegetables (except potatoes)
- Fruits
- Nuts
- Whole grains
- Legumes including beans

- Fish
- Olives and [olive oil](#)

A glass of red wine a day and limited amounts of chicken each week are permissible. Red and fatty meats and sweets should be limited to a few times a month.

The bottom line: For a delicious diet that offers big health benefits, the Mediterranean [diet](#) may be a great choice for you.

More information: The American Heart Association has more about [the Mediterranean diet](#).

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